

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND -- COLLEGE PARK

TUESDAY, OCT. 31, 1967

SDS sit-in disrupts CIA recruiting here

Students for a Democratic Society disrupted Central Intelligence Agency campus recruiting yesterday by holding a sit-in protest in an engineering building classroom where interviews were to have been held.

About 30 SDS members sat-in from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., causing several scheduled interviews to be postponed and temporarily blocking recruiter Arnold Dammen from leaving for lunch.

After campus police threatened to arrest the demonstrators for trespassing on public property, the SDS'ers disbanded. Police read aloud Section 577a, Article 27 of the 1966 Annotated Code of Maryland, which defines trespassing as a misdemeanor with a maximum penalty of a \$1,000 fine and six months in jail.

According to SDS'er Harsh Tankha, a graduate assistant in physics, SDS "succeeded in its limited objective of disrupting the interviews."

Outside the engineering building from about 2 to 3 p.m. several students staged a counter protest, displaying signs that read "SDS burn yourselves, not cards."

The SDS protest began when SDS'ers adjourned a meeting in

the student union and walked to room 161 of the engineering building where the CIA interviews were scheduled. SDS'er Pete Silverman called aside R. Bruce Ritter, Director of the Credentials and Placement Service, as approximately 20 SDS members began the sit-in.

Ritter then asked Silverman, "Do you call this good faith, Pete? You'll disrupt the program."

"That's the idea," Silverman replied.

Ritter requested the group to disperse. "I recognize your right to express your opinion to the extent that you don't deny others their rights," he said. "I must ask you to leave. You're welcome to picket or hand out leaflets."

Silverman read Ritter an SDS policy statement stating that the group planned to stop CIA job interviews by preventing interviewees from entering the room.

When several interviews were postponed in the absence of the CIA recruiter, who left at noon and did not return until 3:30 p.m., Ritter said he felt student's rights had been infringed. "He (the CIA recruiter) will not return until it becomes safe for him to do so," said Ritter.

Ritter conferred with the office of the executive dean for student life and the president's office to determine what action would be taken.

Robert A. Beach Jr., assistant to the president for University relations, said that it was up to campus police Chief, Daniel B. Wiseman to decide whether police

action would be necessary.

However, Walter B. Waetjen, vice president for administrative affairs, said he asked the campus police to intervene.

At about 3 p.m. most SDS'ers left the room, claiming they had accomplished their goal of stopping the interviews.

However, about 10 minutes later, Ritter returned with Dammen and an interviewee, Douglas Chubb, 27, a senior in math. The interview took place and SDS members resumed the sit-in.

At approximately 3:30 p.m., Lt. Richard Mayer of the campus police read the Maryland state law pertaining to trespassing. SDS members vacated the room, saying that their major protest would be Wednesday, when some of them would refuse to leave upon request.

Paul Feldman, a senior in civil engineering forced to forfeit his interview, said that he was "really angry about it. These people talk about rights. I think they're infringing my rights. I came for a job interview which I was prevented from having."

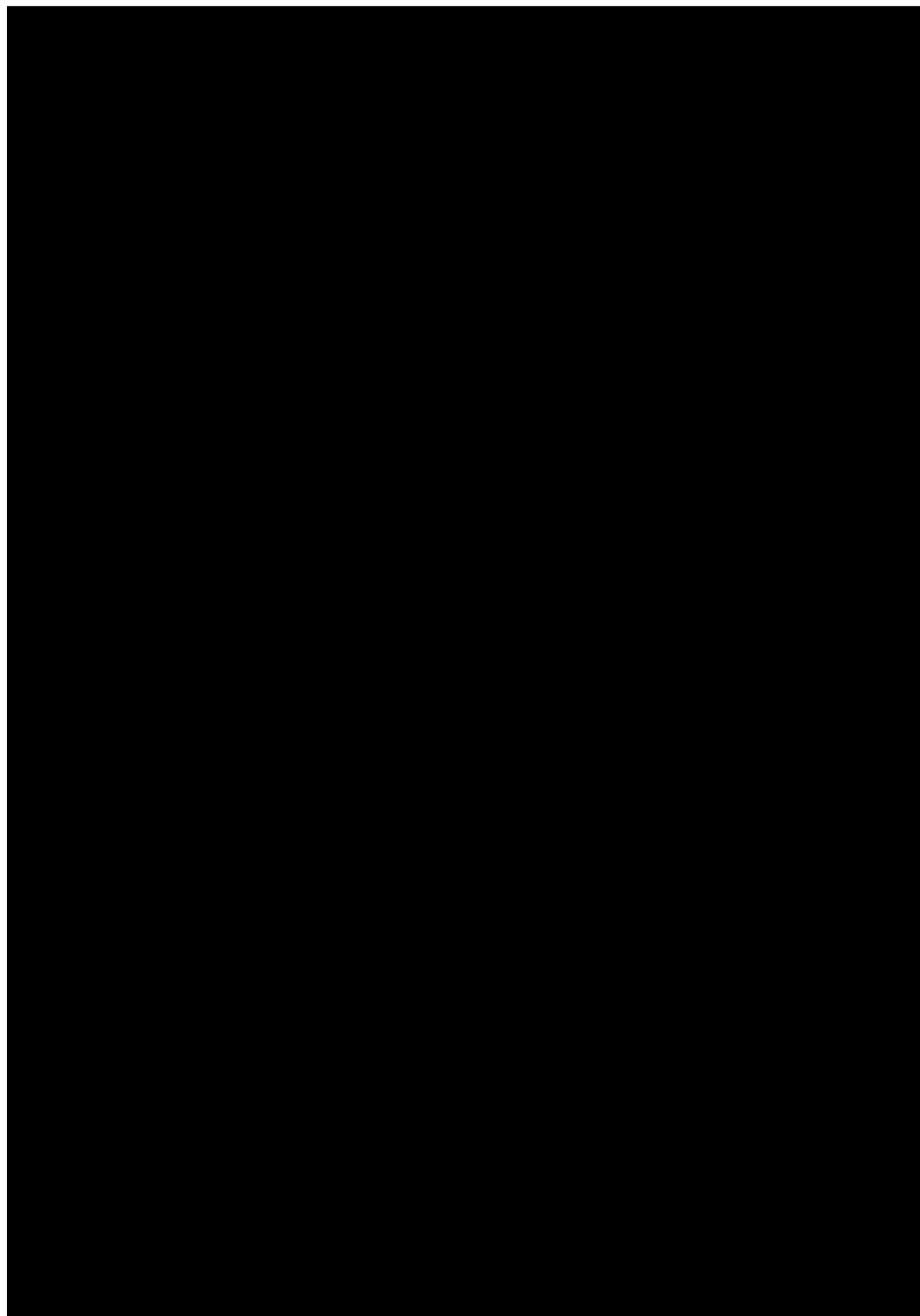
Janis Putman, 22, another student unable to attend her interview, said she felt the protesters had infringed upon her rights since she was unable to meet with the recruiters.

Several students held a counter demonstration outside the engineering building. One of the counter demonstrators, George Gibson, a junior, said he opposed "SDS acting as a spokesman for the entire campus."

Original filed under CIA 104-Dammen

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